



**U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement**

**ICE Health Service Corps (IHSC)  
Enforcement and Removal Operations  
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement**

# **Infectious Disease Public Health Actions Guide: Isolation and Management of Detainees Exposed to Infectious Organisms**

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## **Foreword**

This *Infectious Disease Public Health Actions Guide* *Isolation and Management of Detainees Exposed to Infectious Organisms* supplements the following IHSC Directive:

IHSC Directive: 05-06, *Infectious Disease Public Health Actions*.

This Guide explains concepts, assigns responsibilities and details procedures for detainee isolation and recommendations for social distancing in facilities with IHSC-staffed medical clinics.

The intended audience is IHSC-staffed medical clinics supporting health care operations in ICE-owned or contracted detention facilities.

## **I. Overview**

### **A. Purpose**

The purpose of this Guide is to provide guidance and highlight considerations for the isolation and exposure management of detainees with a suspected, probable, or confirmed infectious disease of public health significance.

Isolation and social distancing are infection control measures intended to control or limit the spread of infectious diseases. These public health strategies limit the exposure between persons infected or potentially infected with an infectious disease, and susceptible persons.

### **B. Responsibilities**

#### Health Services Administrator (HSA)

Responsible for ensuring implementation and oversight of Public Health, Safety, and Preparedness (PHSP) Unit activities in the medical and dental clinics, including isolation and exposure management.

Delegates resources to ensure PHSP activities are accomplished and accounted for.

#### Compliance Officer

Primary lead for coordinating PHSP activities with the HSA, including isolation and exposure management

Serves as a key liaison with PHSP Unit staff.

#### Medical Providers

Oversee the clinical management of isolated or exposed detainees.

Order medical isolation as appropriate.

#### Health Staff

Implement appropriate infection prevention and control measures to prevent the transmission of infectious diseases in IHSC-staffed medical clinics.

Maintain current knowledge about infection prevention and control measures applicable to work duties.

### Public Health, Safety, and Preparedness Unit Staff

Provide guidance to health staff on isolation and exposure management protocols.

Monitor national guidelines and standards for updates and new releases.

### IHSC Infectious Disease Consultant

Provide clinical guidance for public health actions related to the isolation and exposure management of detainees.

## C. Acronyms

**ACIP** – Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices

**All** – Airborne infection isolation

**CDC** – United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

**IDSA** – Infectious Diseases Society of America

**PEP** – Post-exposure prophylaxis

**PPE** – Personal protective equipment

## D. Definitions with Expanded Information

**Airborne infection isolation (All) room** – A single-occupancy patient-care room; formerly called a negative pressure isolation room; environmental factors are controlled so the isolation room receives substantial air changes per hour (ACH) ( $\geq 12$  ACH for new construction since 2001 and  $\geq 6$  ACH for construction before 2001) and is under negative pressure (the direction of air flow is from the outside adjacent space [the corridor] into the room); All room air is preferably exhausted to the outside, or recirculated if the return air is filtered through a high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter.

**Airborne transmission** – Dissemination of airborne particles that remain infective over time and distance.

**Case** – An instance of a particular disease, injury, or other health condition that meets selected criteria.

**Cohort** – A well-defined group of persons who have had a common experience or exposure.

**Cohorting** – Cohorting is a public health strategy used to house individuals separately as a group based on their infectious or exposure status.

**Contact** – A person exposed to an infectious disease.

**Contagious** – When a disease can be transmitted from one living being to another through direct or indirect contact; communicable; infectious; usually microorganisms.

**Enforcement Integrated Database/ENFORCE** – ICE ERO maintains records pertaining to arrests, detentions, and removals in the Immigration and Enforcement Operational Records (ENFORCE) System of Records, which includes the Enforcement Integrated Database (EID).

**Exposure** – The condition of being subjected to something (noise, dust, chemicals, radiation, infectious agents) that could have an adverse health effect.

**General population** – Detainees whose housing and activities are not specifically restricted.

**Incubation period** – The interval between exposure to a communicable microorganism and onset of symptoms.

**Infection control** – Institutional procedures and policies for monitoring and attempting to control the transmission of communicable diseases.

**Infectious disease public health actions** – a broad range of public health activities and interventions to promote and protect health, and prevent or mitigate infectious disease transmission.

**Infectious disease of public health significance** – Infectious diseases that have a significant impact on public health; infectious diseases of public health significance are usually listed as reportable to local, state, and/or federal public health entities, and may have other laws that apply with regard to corresponding public health interventions.

**Infectious period** – The period during which a person might have transmitted a communicable microorganism to others.

**Isolation** – An infection control measure used to separate ill persons who have a communicable disease from those who are healthy. Isolation restricts the movement of ill persons to help stop the spread of significant infectious diseases.

**Outbreak** – The sudden increase in the incidence of a disease or condition, when the observed number of cases exceeds the expected number of cases of disease.

**Personal protective equipment** – Equipment that protects a person from hazardous exposures such as chemicals, dust, noise, radiation, infectious diseases and includes respirators, gloves, mask, goggles, gowns, face shields, ear plugs, hard hats, steel toe boots.

**Social distancing** – Measures to increase space between people and decrease the frequency of contact among people; minimize transmission by reducing contact between susceptible and infectious individuals.

**Standard precautions** – Infection prevention practices, including hand hygiene, that apply to all patients regardless of infectious status. Standard precautions are a combination and expansion of Universal Precautions and Body Substance Isolation, based on the principle that all blood, body fluids, secretions, excretions ( except sweat), non-intact skin, and mucous membranes contain transmissible infectious agents. Standard precautions includes hand hygiene, and depending on the anticipated exposure, use of gloves, gown, mask, eye protection, or face shield. Equipment or items in the patient environment likely to have been contaminated with infectious fluids must be handled in a manner to prevent transmission of infectious agents, (e.g., wear gloves for handling, contain heavily soiled equipment, properly clean and disinfect or sterilize reusable equipment before use on another patient).

**Symptomatic** – A term applied to a patient with health-related complaints (symptoms) that might indicate the presence of disease.

**Transmission-based precautions** – Precautions that provide additional protections beyond standard precautions to interrupt the transmission of pathogens.

## II. Isolation

### A. Isolation Principles

Isolation is an infection control measure used to separate ill persons who have a communicable disease from those who are healthy. Isolation restricts the movement of ill persons to help stop the spread of significant infectious diseases.

A medical provider must order isolation with appropriate transmission-based

precautions for detainees with a suspect, probable, or confirmed infectious disease of public health significance for the duration of the infectious period.

- Preferred isolation rooms include airborne infection isolation (All) rooms, Medical Housing Units (MHUs), single cell rooms, or rooms with restricted contact to other detainees, depending on the appropriate transmission-based precautions for the infectious organism.

The HSA should maintain contingency plans for alternate isolation options if the clinic exceeds its capabilities and isolation is not possible. If isolation rooms are not available, health care personnel should implement contingency procedures in consultation with the HSA, Clinical Director (CD), or designee. A contingency procedure may include shared rooms for detainees diagnosed with the same illness or MHU placement instead of All placement if All is not essential.

- The HSA should assess the medical risks and operational impact associated with alternate detainee placement options and consult with the CD or designee when a single medical housing room is not available.

The HSA should establish arrangements and agreements with medical facilities in the community, and should have a written plan for referring detainees with a suspected or confirmed infectious disease of public health significance to an appropriate facility, if appropriate capabilities are not available on-site.

Health staff should follow appropriate standard and transmission-based precautions (see the *IHSC Management of Blood Borne Pathogens and Other Potentially Infectious Materials Guide*).

Health staff should use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) (see the *IHSC Personal Protective Equipment Guide*).

All MHUs and All rooms should have the appropriate staffing levels (see IHSC Directive: 03-17, *Medical Housing Units*).

The CD, Regional Clinical Director, Associate Medical Director, or Deputy Assistant Director (DAD) of Clinical Services will approve expanded MHU accommodations in the event of an outbreak, epidemic, or pandemic.

The HSA or designee should adjust work schedules and assignments for staff

vulnerable to complications if exposed.

A health care provider must educate detainees in isolation regarding infection prevention and control measures, the applicable infectious disease, and the reasons for isolation.

Health staff should implement infection prevention and control measures and maintain social distancing to the extent possible to control the spread of infectious diseases of public health significance.

Health staff should inform facility staff that precautions are recommended for staff and visitors that may come into close contact with an ill detainee during the contagious period.

## **B. Infectious Disease Management**

A medical provider should monitor the health status of detainees in medical isolation. The medical provider is responsible for their overall treatment and health care (see IHSC Directive: 03-17, *Medical Housing Units*).

## **C. IHSC Global Alert/Medical Hold**

The IHSC Global Alert/Medical Hold in the health record is a tool to restrict unintended movement. A medical hold in the health record does not confer ICE authority to detain. Providers should consider a medical hold for detainees with an infectious disease of public health significance until the detainee is rendered non-contagious and to facilitate arrangements for continuity of care prior to transfer, release or removal. Health staff use the IHSC Global Alert/Medical Hold to document the action in the health record.

(b)(7)(E)



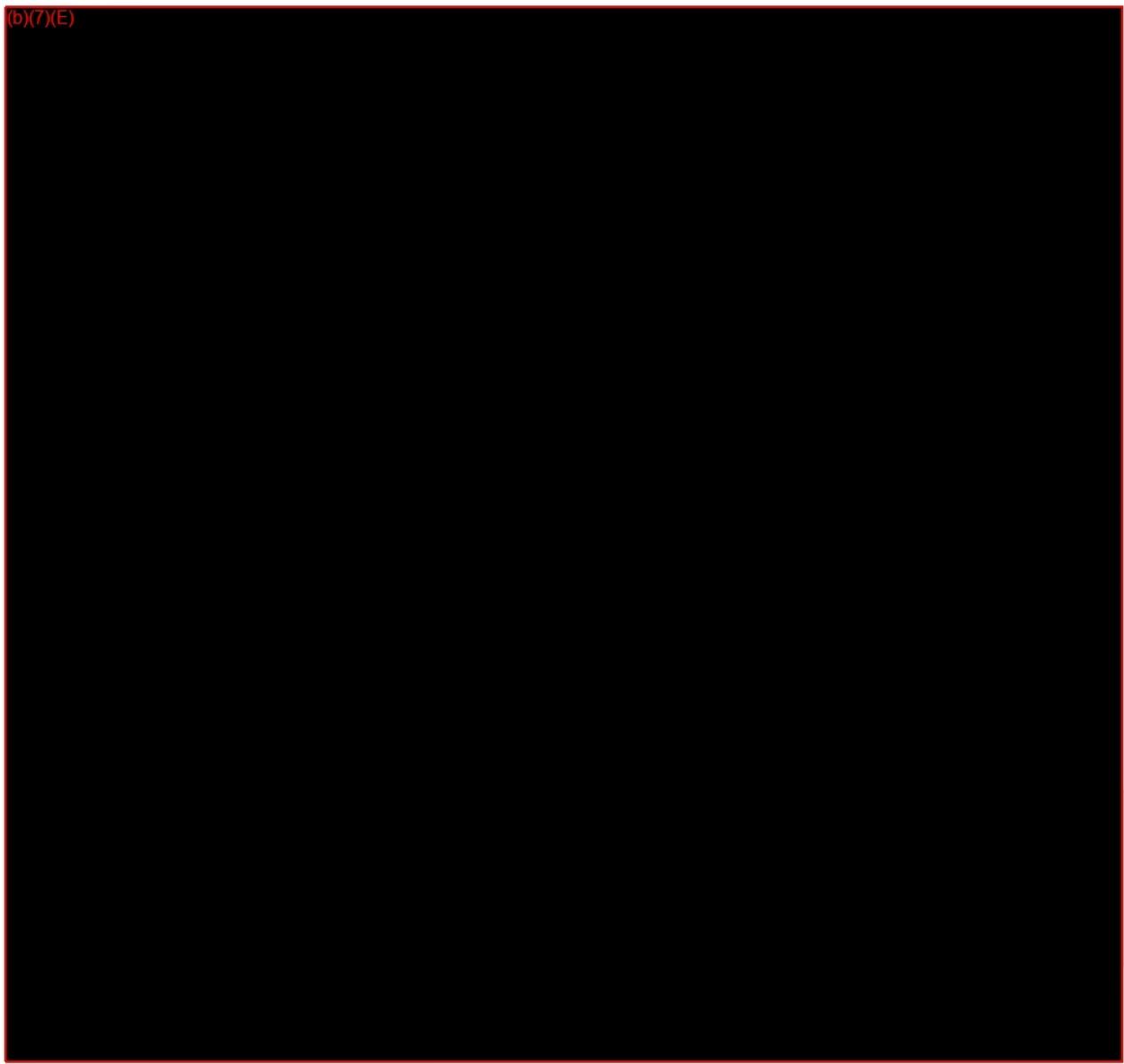
#### **D. Medical Alert and IHSC Medical Hold in EID/ENFORCE**

The EID/ENFORCE Medical Alert and IHSC Medical Hold are tools to inform ICE/Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) of a requested action for medical or public health reasons, such as notification prior to transfer, release, or removal. Both are types of alerts found in the Alerts Section of EID/ENFORCE. IHSC staff must not specify a detainee's confidential medical information for either type of alert. Health staff should contact the Public Health, Safety, and Preparedness (PHSP) Unit Infection Control Lead if the facility needs assistance with this process.

After logging into EID/ENFORCE and entering detainee A#:

- (1) Select "Supporting Info"
- (2) Select "Alerts"
- (3) Select "Add"
- (4) Select "Medical" or "IHSC Medical Hold" (see Table 1)

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**Table 1: Comparing EID ENFORCE Alert Types – M - Medical vs. IMH - IHSC Medical Hold**

	Medical	IHSC Medical Hold
Health staff or IHSC HQ staff place the alert	✓	✓
ERO staff cannot complete book out if this type of alert is placed		✓
IHSC staff must not specify a detainee's confidential medical information	✓	✓
Does not confer ICE authority to detain	✓	✓
Conveys information but not restrictions	✓	
Should be placed for detainees diagnosed with infectious diseases of public health significance, until the detainee is rendered non-contagious		✓
Health staff or IHSC HQ staff remove, or request removal of, the alert when it is no longer needed (e.g., when the detainee is medically able to be transferred, released, or removed) and when required referrals and notifications have occurred		✓

### **III. Management of Detainees Exposed to Infectious Organisms**

#### **A. Social Distancing and Cohorting Principles**

Social distancing refers to measures to increase the space between people and decrease the frequency of contact among people. In congregate settings, social distancing involves reducing the frequency of close contact among persons who have been exposed or potentially exposed to an infectious disease, but do not show symptoms, for the duration of the incubation period. Cohorting is a public health strategy used to house individuals separately as a group based on their infectious or exposure status. The incubation period is unique to each disease, and should be determined in accordance with United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), or other relevant, guidelines.

The HSA or designee should recommend implementing social distancing to the facility administrator and the facility's designee for safety, for the duration of the incubation period and as appropriate to mitigate transmission following exposures to infectious organisms.

In adult detention facilities, the HSA or designee should recommend implementing cohorting to house exposed detainees without reliable evidence of immunity together as a group with restricted movement for the duration of the incubation period for the specific disease. If a secondary case(s) is identified in a restricted housing group, the incubation period should begin again.

In family residential facilities with open movement, the HSA or designee should recommend implementing social distancing to the extent possible, to control the spread of infectious diseases of public health significance.

The HSA or designee should implement the following:

The HSA or designee should adjust work schedules and assignments for vulnerable health staff to limit exposure to the disease.

Health staff must observe the condition of exposed detainees on restricted movement daily for signs or symptoms of the illness to which they were exposed.

- Health staff must document the exposure and restricted movement in an initial note in the health record, and reference daily monitoring tools that will be used for daily observations during the incubation periods.
- Health staff may use separate monitoring tools to facilitate daily observation of large numbers of exposed detainees. Health staff must maintain these monitoring tools systematically so they can be referenced and retrieved.
- Health staff must document the completion of the restricted movement period in the health record.

Health staff must educate exposed detainees on infection prevention and control measures, the applicable infectious disease and the reasons for restricted movement.

A medical provider should consider urgent, non-occupational post-exposure prophylaxis (nPEP) for detainees, if medically appropriate, according to the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), CDC, and the Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA) recommendations.

The HSA, CD, or designee should consider recommending that exposed detainees be released to the general population when immunity is confirmed or the incubation periods are completed and no new cases are identified.

## **IV. Program Monitoring**

PHSP Unit staff will periodically request information from health staff at IHSC-staffed medical clinics to monitor isolation protocols and recommendations for cohorting or social distancing.

## **V. Training and Education**

### **A. Health Staff**

The HSA or designee should ensure that orientation and annual training that includes isolation and exposure management principles is implemented and documented in accordance with IHSC Directive *01-04 Medical Education and Development*

### **B. Detainees**

Health care personnel should educate detainees diagnosed with or exposed to an infectious disease of public health significance, about topics such as transmission, risk factors, and infection prevention and control measures.

## **VI. Privacy and Recordkeeping**

Please refer to IHSC Directive: 05-06, *Infectious Disease Public Health Actions*, for guidance on complying with privacy and recordkeeping procedures.

## **VII. References and Resources**

- (1) [United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. About Quarantine and Isolation.](#)
- (2) [Siegel JD, Rhinehart E, Jackson M, Chiarello L, and the Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee, 2007 Guideline for Isolation Precautions: Preventing Transmission of Infectious Agents in Healthcare Settings.](#)